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Department of
Education**

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Messages From the Department of Education

February 2014

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ACCOUNTABILITY, ASSESSMENT, INSTRUCTION, AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

A. Common Core Assessment and Accountability Guides

The National PTA recently created a new series of state Common Core Assessment and Accountability guides to serve as a resource to parents as states transition to new assessments. These guides include background on the standards and state-specific information about their assessment consortium, the testing timeline, sample test questions, impacts on students, new accountability systems and ways for parents to get involved and support their child's learning at home. Guides are now available at www.education.nh.gov/instruction/assessment/index.htm.

Contact: Scott Mantie, (603) 271-3844, Scott.Mantie@doe.nh.gov

B. National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS)

The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) has scheduled a final public review of the draft PreK-12 arts standards in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts. The review will open February 14, 2014, and close February 28. A draft reading copy of the revised standards is available at <http://nccas.wikispaces.com>. For more information about the review and upcoming release of the standards in June 2014, visit www.nhmea.org.

Contact: Marcia McCaffrey, (603) 271-3193, Marcia.Mccaffrey@doe.nh.gov

C. New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) Fall 2013 Test Results

The results of the Fall 2013 NECAP for grades three through eight and high school have been released by the New Hampshire Department of Education. NECAP is a collaborative partnership among New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Maine established in response to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) which requires that all states annually measure achievement of students in grades three through eight, and in one high school grade. All public NECAP reports for schools, districts, and the state, as well as *The Guide to Interpreting the 2013 NECAP Reports* can be located at <http://reporting.measuredprogress.org/nhprofile>.

Contact: Scott Mantie, (603) 271-3844, Scott.Mantie@doe.nh.gov

D. Smarter Balanced Field Test

The Smarter Balanced Field Test will take place from March 18 – June 6, 2014. The Field Test is a trial run of the assessment system that helps ensure the assessments are valid, reliable, and fair for all students. It also gives teachers and schools a chance to gauge their readiness in advance of the first operational assessment in spring 2015. Smarter Balanced conservatively estimates that at least 3 million students will participate in the field test across all 22 Smarter Balanced governing states, presenting a unique opportunity to portray for key stakeholders the benefits of a next-generation assessment system that will provide accurate information about where students stand on the pathway to success. More information about the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium can be found at www.education.nh.gov/spotlight/ccss/sbac.htm.

E. Smarter Balanced National Pilot – NOT Endorsed by Smarter Balanced

An organization called Wowzers, which produces online math materials for Grades 3 to 8, is marketing a “Smarter Balanced National Pilot” to select districts. This effort has no relationship to the upcoming Smarter Balanced Field Test or to Smarter Balanced generally. Wowzers did not seek permission to use the Smarter Balanced name. Further, Smarter Balanced does not endorse Wowzers or its products.

Contact: Scott Mantie, (603) 271-3844, Scott.Mantie@doe.nh.gov

F. WIDA English Language Development Standards and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

New Hampshire is a member of the WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) Consortium. In 2004, the New Hampshire State Board of Education adopted the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards. The WIDA standards provide educators of English Learners with a curriculum and assessment planning tool for content area objectives. With funding from a UNH professional development grant and under the direction of Dr. Suzanne Irujo, New Hampshire English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and mainstream teachers worked for five years on aligning the English Language Proficiency Standards with New Hampshire’s Content Standards. During the last year of this project, this professional learning community developed documents showing correspondences between the WIDA Language Development Standards and the CCSS. These documents are now posted on the NH DOE-New Hampshire English Language Proficiency Standards web page at www.education.nh.gov/instruction/integrated/title_iii_information_nh.htm.

Contact: Dr. Andrea Somoza-Norton, (603) 271-2034, Andrea.Somoza-Norton@doe.nh.gov

CERTIFICATION

A. Employment Reporting

All educators employed with New Hampshire districts must have their employment status updated every year. This includes all certified SAU office staff, such as the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Business Administrator. The employment information needs to be updated for online renewal. The Bureau of Credentialing is relying on districts to enter the data. For technical issues with the i4see uploads please contact i4see.help@doe.nh.gov.

Contact: Lisa Landenberger, (603) 271-2409, Lisa.Landenberger@doe.nh.gov

B. National Board for Teaching Standards Certification

NH offers \$1,000 towards the cost of an educator seeking National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. For more information on the NBPTS see www.nbpts.org.

Contact: Judith Fillion, (603) 271-3855, Judith.Fillion@doe.nh.gov

C. NH Foundations of Reading Test

Effective beginning July 14, 2014, the NH Foundations of reading assessment will be required for the following endorsements: Elementary Education K-6 and K-8, Early Childhood

Education, Reading and Writing Teacher, and Reading Specialist. For information about the test please go to www.nh.nesinc.com

Contact: Ginny Clifford, (603) 271-3455, Virginia.Clifford@doe.nh.gov

D. Online Renewal

Employed educators who are due to renew by June 30, 2014 are encouraged to renew online as it has a much quicker turn-around time. Reminder: There is a late charge for renewals postmarked July 2, 2014 or later.

Contact: Lisa Landenberger, (603) 271-2409, Lisa.Landenberger@doe.nh.gov

E. Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators: REPLACEMENT FOR PRAXIS I

The Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators assessment has replaced the PPST or Praxis I. When students register for their tests be sure to select their tests from the New Hampshire page on the ETS website. Educators will now take the Core before obtaining a Statement of Eligibility (SOE) instead of the Praxis I. See: www.ets.org/praxis/nh/requirements "Tests Required for All Licensure Areas."

Contact: Ginny Clifford, (603) 271-3455, Virginia.Clifford@doe.nh.gov

DATA

A. i4see – Initiative for School Empowerment and Excellence

a) Finishing up EOY 2012-13.

Many districts have not signed and sent the final two reports for finishing up EOY 2012-13. They are: "ADM Report" and "EOY Determination Sign Off." These are required signatures for Adequacy Aid documentation. If your district has not already done so, please sign and send as soon as possible.

b) 2013-14 Beginning of Year (BOY) documents

The 2013-14 BOY documents that need signing are the "Fall Enrollment Sign-Off" and the "High School Dropouts," "Completers," and "Cohort" Reports. If your district has not already done so, please sign and send as soon as possible.

c) NH Alt Registration

The i4see workbench will be open for districts to register students for the Alternative Assessment process starting on March 3, 2014. The window will close on March 31, 2014. E-mail details will be sent to all district staff involved in the process. During this window, school districts should register all students who are the responsibility of the district, no matter where they attend school.

Contact: Sandy Hyslop, (603) 271-2831 or i4see.help@doe.nh.gov

B. PerformancePLUS Update

a) Data Use Statewide Training

Register now: <http://tinyurl.com/nhdataconference>

Please join us on March 18th from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at NHTI in Concord for our fifth Data Use Conference. With the adoption of Common Core Standards, Response to Intervention systems, and new teacher evaluation systems, schools throughout

New Hampshire are focused on assessments. What assessment data is useful for which purposes? How can PerformancePLUS facilitate analyzing the data? How can we use PerformancePLUS to develop and administer common core aligned assessments? Or, how can we use PerformancePLUS with progress monitoring assessments to foster collaboration between all professionals working with a student? These are some of the questions you can explore at the 5th Annual Statewide Data Use Conference.

There will be workshops facilitated by the NHDOE data training team, data leaders from New Hampshire schools, PerformancePLUS representatives, and Smarter Balanced (SBAC) experts. We are excited to have Brandt Redd with us as our key note speaker. As the CTO for SBAC, Brandt will provide a national perspective on the Common Core Standards, Smarter Balanced Assessment, and the importance of using multiple measures. We will also wrap up the day with an update about SBAC in New Hampshire.

b) NECAP Results available in PerformancePLUS

Contact the NHDOE data training team for a facilitator to analyze these results with your team.

c) NEW! PerformancePLUS Release

Open-ended questions in P+'s Online Assessment tool (OLA). Students can take assessments online to help prepare them for Smarter Balanced.

d) Free!! PerformancePLUS webinars are available

The complete list of the free webinars available to school and district staff is available at: www.education.nh.gov/instruction/accountability/data-systems/training.htm. Past webinars can be replayed at: <http://nh.eduplanet21.com/community/analyzing-student-data-network/links/>. Once signed into the network, go to, "Analyzing Student Data" and click on "Links." From this page you will see the links titled "Webinars."

Contact: Irene Koffink, (603) 271-3865, Irene.Koffink@doe.nh.gov

GRANTS and REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

ALL RFPs Can be Found on the Department Website at

www.education.nh.gov/rfp/index.htm

A. 21st Century Community Learning Grant Competition

The New Hampshire Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center Program announces its 2014 competition for an anticipated \$1.3 million in funding. The program's purpose is to raise student academic achievement through the creation and expansion of community learning centers during out of school time hours that provide students with academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional activities designed to complement their regular academic program. All schools with a minimum of 30% of the student population identified as recipients of the free/reduced lunch program by October 2013 are eligible to apply. Middle and high schools are eligible if the majority of the feeder elementary schools meet the eligibility criteria. Priority points will be awarded to priority and focus schools. For more information go to www.education.nh.gov/instruction/integrated/title_iv_b_grant.htm.

Contact: Suzanne Birdsall at (603) 520-6263, Suzanne.Birdsall-Stone@doe.nh.gov or
Christina MacDonald at (603) 271-7306, Christina.MacDonald@doe.nh.gov

HEARINGS

Hedc 500, Scholarships for Orphans of Veterans

A public hearing will be held May 15, 2014, at 2:15 p.m. at the NH Higher Education Assistance Conference Center, 3 Barrell Court, Concord, NH 03301. Deadline for written comment will be May 15th, at the close of the public hearing.

Contact: Mary Mayo, (603) 271-3189, Mary.Mayo@doe.nh.gov

INNOVATIONS/INITIATIVES

A. A K-12 Federal Policy Framework for Competency Education: Building Capacity for Systems Change

The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) and KnowledgeWorks have released a new report on competency education which provides federal policymakers with a comprehensive vision for supporting state and local efforts to implement student-centered learning. *A K-12 Federal Policy Framework for Competency Education: Building Capacity for Systems Change* describes barriers and opportunities within federal education policy frameworks and identifies how the federal government is in a unique position to catalyze and scale student-centered learning approaches. As lawmakers in Washington, DC craft a next generation Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), they are encouraged to take bold steps forward to allow students to advance upon demonstrated mastery and receive the personalized support they need, when they need it, to ensure America's children graduate from high school both college and career ready. To download this report please go to www.inacol.org.

B. NH TCAP (Teacher Candidate Assessment of Performance)

There is an exciting state-wide initiative happening in NH. Proposed by the 15 teacher preparation programs of the NHIHE (Institution of Higher Education) Network, the NH TCAP is currently being piloted through student teachers in districts around the state. This initiative is the result of a proactive approach to current educational trends toward accountability and increasing the rigor of teacher preparation. The NH TCAP is consistent with current national developments in educator preparation accreditation. The tasks of this common assessment include lesson planning and videoing of teacher candidates to assess their efficacy. If your district hosts a teacher candidate involved in the pilot, please support and encourage the work of teacher preparation faculty and their candidates in successfully completing all components of this pilot. If you have any questions, please contact your partner IHE or the co-facilitators of the NH IHE Network, Audrey Rogers, SNHU (a.rogers@snhu.edu) and Tom Schram, UNH (tom.schram@unh.edu).

NH HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

A. High School Redesign in Action

High School Redesign in Action is the New England Secondary School Consortium's fifth annual conference for educators across the country to share success stories, exchange best practices, and continue to build momentum for innovations that will prepare all students for success in the colleges, careers, and communities of the 21st century. This conference is

taking place in Norwood, MA on March 20-21, 2014. To register or for more information go to <http://newenglandssc.org/conference>.

NH NETWORKS

The New Hampshire Network platform has exciting updates! The new design is more visually engaging and easier to use, with icons representing networks, learning paths, favorite content and networking opportunities personalized to your interests. Come find out about the exciting and innovative work that is taking place all over the state at www.education.nh.gov/networks. The English Learners Network has been steadily growing since September, adding 106 members in four months. In February, many participants will be participating in a learning path book study to deepen their skills and understanding of English Learners in Special Education. The learning path, developed by network lead Andrea Somoza-Norton, is designed to engage educators in asynchronous learning—allowing them to learn at their own pace and collaborate with other teachers and administrators from across the state.

Contact: Mary Earick, (603) 271-6052, Mary.Earick@doe.nh.gov

SCHOOL APPROVAL STANDARDS

This section applies to both public and non-public schools

A. Public School Approval

RSA 193-E:3-b, *Accountability for the Opportunity for an Adequate Education*, requires school officials to submit a narrative explanation detailing how their school complies with each of 12 applicable minimum standards included in the definition of an “opportunity for an adequate education” at least once every two years. This submission is accomplished through the online Input Based Accountability System (IBAS) Survey. If a School was approved in 2013, no action is needed. Otherwise the **Survey was to be submitted through the online system by January 31, 2014**. If the Survey hasn’t yet been completed, principals should do so as soon as possible so their superintendent can review and submit the Survey. The IBAS Survey can be found in the MyDOE Single Sign-On System at: <https://my.doe.nh.gov/myNHDOE>. Principals of schools with an approval status expiring June 2014 are required to answer all the questions in the IBAS Survey **and** submit fire and health inspection reports to the Office of School Approval. Health inspection forms are available on the Department’s Web site at www.education.nh.gov/program/school_approval/public_approval_forms.htm.

Contact: Marie Morgan, (603) 271-4125, Marie.Morgan@doe.nh.gov

SPECIAL EDUCATION

A. IEP Goals - Preschool Children with Disabilities Workshop

The New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce the How to Write Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance and age-appropriate measurable annual IEP goals for Preschool Children with Disabilities This workshop and follow-up coaching opportunity is designed to assist special educators and related service providers working with preschool age children with disabilities on how to use student data/information to write Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLOAAFP). They will learn how to write Measurable Annual

Goals in order to build students' skills so they can access, participate and make progress in appropriate preschool activities. The workshops will be held at the NH DOE on Thursday, March 6th, from 9:00 a.m. – noon and on Friday, March 21st, from 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Contact: Elaine Hennessy, (603) 271-3075, Elaine.Hennessy@doe.nh.gov

B. Next Steps NH

The Bureau of Special Education is pleased to announce that the Next Steps NH project is already making a positive impact in New Hampshire. Next Steps NH is funded by a State Personnel Development Grant awarded to the Bureau of Special Education, from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Next Steps NH focuses on developing and sustaining the skills of New Hampshire school district personnel and families to increase the number of students with disabilities graduating from high school that are college and career ready. The outcomes of the grant will move the State from a compliance focus to a deeper, more comprehensive evidence-based approach to transition planning. Two exciting ways that this is being accomplished are by collaborating with New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation and the New Hampshire Transition Community of Practice (NH CoP). Vocational Rehabilitation administration and counselors are members of the Next Steps NH Leadership Team which concentrates specifically on the development and implementation of the project's activities. The NH CoP, acting in an advisory capacity to the project, is a transformative team consisting of a diverse group of transition stakeholders that was developed in 2004 under the Bureau of Special Education with the IDEA Partnership grant.

Contact: Mary Steady, (603) 271-3730, Mary.Steady@doe.nh.gov or
Donna Couture, (603) 271-1536, Donna.Couture@doe.nh.gov

C. Surrogate Parent Program

The Educational Surrogate Parent Program, coordinated by the New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education, is a volunteer program designed to provide a child with a disability with an educational surrogate parent to act as the child's educational decision-maker. As the educational decision-maker you would participate in a child's special education team meetings. The NH DOE requires applicants to participate in a nine-hour training, which is offered at no cost to applicants. The training includes information on the special education process and related topics. (Professional Development credits are available for this training.) Training Schedule:

- Saturday, April 12, 2014, Plymouth, NH (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, May 10, 2014, Portsmouth, NH (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 7, 2014, Conway or Concord, NH (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)

Contact: Amy Jenks, (603) 271-3842, Amy.Jenks@doe.nh.gov

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. New England League of Middle School 33rd Annual Conference

The NELMS conference is specifically designed for educators who work with the young adolescent. Be inspired, gain knowledge based on research and best practices, be part of a community of learners that believe and understand the young adolescent. Listen to keynotes

by Nancy Doda and Jack Berckemeyer, there will also be half day sessions relating to student advisory, argument writing and open response, student empowerment, digital storytelling, active learning in a digital world, and foundations of writing, along with a technology playroom, strands of instruction and assessment, content curriculum, leadership, and middle level practices. This conference will take place March 31-April 1, 2014 at the RI Convention Center in Providence. Graduate Credits/CEU's are available. To register or for more information go to www.nelms.org.

Contact: Mary-Ellen Arigo, (60) 271-8315, Mary-Ellen.Arigo@doe.nh.gov

B. Learning Forward New Hampshire Conference

The Learning Forward...Moving Forward: From Standards for Professional Learning to New Hampshire Master Plans Conference will take place on Friday, March 21, 2014 at SNHU in Manchester. To register or for more information go to www.lfnh.org.

Contact: Lisa Kaim, Lisa.Kaim@doe.nh.gov, (603) 271-8049

C. Mathematics 51st Annual Spring Conference

New Hampshire Teachers of Mathematics 51st Annual Spring Conference is being held at NHTI in Concord on Monday, March 17, 2014. The keynote speaker is Linda Gojak, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics President! This year's theme is *Leading Us to the Pot O' Gold – The Standards for Mathematical Practice*. For registration, a draft program, and the conference's "schedule-at-a-glance" please visit www.nhmathteachers.org. Register at <http://tinyurl.com/NHTM2014> by March 1st for lowest registration fees.

D. OPEN NH Self-Paced Tutorials

a) Bullying Awareness and Prevention (a 3-Hour Self-Paced Tutorial)

In an effort to assist schools in providing training for ALL school related employees, volunteers, substitute teachers and others, NH e-Learning for Educators Project short online tutorial training on bullying awareness and prevention. This tutorial costs \$10.00 and covers basic issues surrounding bullying, the impact of cyberbullying, and the requirements of the New Hampshire Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention Act. Participants will earn a Certificate of Completion for three hours of professional development that will satisfy the required basic training in bullying awareness and prevention. For more information and online registration, visit www.regonline.com/bullyingtutorial.

b) The NH 3 Tiered Bullying Prevention and Intervention Model (a 5-Hour Self-Paced Tutorial)

This tutorial costs \$25.00 and covers the three tiers: general prevention, at risk intervention, and targeting of severe needs. The characteristics of an effective bullying prevention program are also covered. Participants will earn a Certificate of Completion for 5 hours of professional development that will satisfy the required basic training in bullying awareness and prevention. For more information and online registration, visit <https://www.regonline.com/nh3tierbullying>. A complete 7-week course is also available through **OPEN NH**, and will be offered in future OPEN NH course sessions, or by special district cohort request.

c) Substitute Teaching: Tools and Tips for Success, a 5-hour Self-Paced Tutorial

In an effort to assist schools in preparing potential substitute teachers for teaching in NH schools, the **NH e-Learning for Educators**, a program of the New Hampshire Department of Education, is offering a short online tutorial through **OPEN NH**. This tutorial costs \$25.00 and provides basic knowledge and skills necessary for being an effective substitute teacher. Proper preparation before substituting in a school or district will greatly increase the confidence and comfort level of substitute teachers working with students in the classroom. The tutorial provides a brief overlook of the situation in education today and prepares potential substitutes with an understanding of how teachers and students interact in our changing educational landscape. Basic skills and techniques for teaching lessons to students along with some strategies for managing behavioral issues are explored. Finally, the tutorial covers a basic understanding of the kinds of policies and procedures that schools must operate under, including the NH pupil safety policy involving bullying. For more information and online registration, visit <https://www.regonline.com/substitutetutorial>. In the future, NH e-Learning for Educators plans to offer a complete 7-week course for substitute teaching which will be offered in future OPEN NH course sessions, or by special district cohort request.

Districts may register cohorts of teachers in either or both tutorials at reduced cohort registration rates. For more information, visit www.opennh.org or contact the OPEN NH Project Coordinator.

Contact: Stan Freeda, (603) 271-5132, or Stanley.Freeda@doe.nh.gov

E. OPEN NH Online Professional Development Courses

Registrations are now being accepted for the Winter Session of OPEN NH courses. The seven week, 35 hour online professional development courses began on February 5th and run through March 25th. The registration fee for OPEN NH professional development courses is \$130. Districts can also request the special delivery of any of our courses over a 7-8 week time frame of their choice. To request a special delivery course, a designated team leader should complete a Special Course Delivery Registration form, available online, and send it to the OPEN NH Project Coordinator for processing, or contact the coordinator.

OPEN NH offers a variety of group discounts for SAUs, districts, or schools. Deals include 25 seats in our seven week 35 hour online professional development courses for \$2,625 or four seats for two teachers for \$440. The list of OPEN NH professional development courses offered during the upcoming OPEN NH sessions can be found on the Web site at: www.opennh.org.

Graduate credits are available through Plymouth State University at additional cost of \$185 plus a \$30 registration fee. OPEN NH is part of the NH e-Learning for Educators Project, a program of the New Hampshire Department of Education.

Contact: Stan Freeda, (603) 271-5132, or Stanley.Freeda@doe.nh.gov

DEPARTMENT STAFF UPDATES

After 22 years with the Department of Education, **Leslie Higgins**, assigned to the Office of School Approval, retired January 31, 2014. Her assistance to both public and private schools over these many years is greatly appreciated.

RESOURCES

A. Educator's Guide to the Universe

The McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center offers educational programming, field trips, outreach programs, teacher workshops and symposiums. *The Educator's Guide to the Universe* includes information for the 2013-2014 school year. The guide can be found at www.starhop.com/education-and-exploration/programs/educator-resources.aspx.

B. Financial Aid Toolkit to Improve College Access and Affordability

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced the launch of an online "one-stop shop" financial aid tool kit for guidance counselors and other advisers who help students select postsecondary institutions and finance their higher educations. The Financial Aid Toolkit consolidates financial aid resources and content into a searchable online database, making it easy for individuals to quickly access the information they need to support their students. The searchable online database provides access to resources covering the entire financial aid lifecycle from applying for financial assistance to repaying student loans. It includes documents such as materials for financial aid nights at institutions publications, presentations, brochures, videos, and sample tweets and Facebook posts. The tool kit also offers professional development information, such as training opportunities and resources for self-instruction. The toolkit can be found at <http://financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk>.

C. The Period of PURPLE Crying for Teens: Understanding Infant Crying.

The Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth has secured a second round of funding to provide 20 resource kits to high schools in New Hampshire called: The Period of PURPLE Crying for Teens: Understanding Infant Crying. This is a primary prevention project to prevent abusive head trauma in infants. April is "Prevent Child Abuse Month" and these kits will help prepare students to be informed about this challenging public health problem. The Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth has been working with the Abusive Head Trauma Coalition in New Hampshire for several years to explore primary prevention strategies to prevent abusive head trauma, or what was formerly known as shaken baby syndrome. This form of child maltreatment is the most lethal form of child abuse and infants are at highest risk for death. It has been identified that crying is the most common trigger in these abusive events. For more information and to reserve your kit contact: Debra Samaha, Program Director/Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth at debra.samaha@dartmouth.edu or (603) 653-8360.

D. Regional Educational Laboratory Program

REL Northeast and Islands, or REL-NEI, is one of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories across the country charged with helping states and districts systematically use data and analysis to answer important issues of education policy and practice with the goal of improving student outcomes. REL Northeast and Islands builds research capacity and a knowledge base across the region by: Assisting states, districts, and schools in using their data systems; Conducting and supporting high-quality research and evaluation that focuses

on four regional priorities; Providing opportunities for practitioners to engage with education research; and Helping education policymakers and practitioners to incorporate data-based inquiry practices into regular decision-making. For more information please visit www.relnei.org.

OTHER

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

Nominations for outstanding elementary, grades K-6 mathematics and science (including computer science) teachers are now open for the 2014 awards. The PAEMST are the nation's highest honors for K-12 teachers of mathematics and science. Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education. Since 1983, more than 4,200 teachers have been recognized for their contributions in the classroom and to their profession. If you know great teachers, nominate them to join this prestigious network of professionals. The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2014. The nomination form should be completed early enough to ensure that the nominated teacher is given enough time to thoroughly prepare an application that reflects exemplary teaching prior to the application deadline. Applications are due by May 1, 2014. For more information, visit www.education.nh.gov/recognition/math_science.htm.

Contact: Jiffi Rainie, (603) 271-7450, Jennifer.Rainie@doe.nh.gov

National Youth Science Camp

Applications to represent New Hampshire at the 2014 National Youth Science Camp (NYSC) are open. Two high school seniors will receive a full scholarship to exchange ideas with scientists and other professionals from the academic and corporate worlds. The nearly month-long experience includes lectures and hands-on research projects presented by scientists from across the nation; overnight camping trips into the Monogahela National Forest; and a visit to Washington, D.C. The selected delegates must not only demonstrate academic achievement in science, but also show potential for thoughtful scientific leadership. The NYSC experience is offered at no cost to its participants, so that selected delegates may attend regardless of their financial status. To apply or for more information go to www.nysf.org. Applications must be submitted by March 1, 2014.

Unitil Scholarship Fund

Unitil is now accepting applications from graduating high school seniors who will pursue an undergraduate degree in the STEM subject areas—science, technology, engineering, and math. Unitil is committed to supporting STEM education and to helping local students succeed. Unitil will award six \$5,000 scholarships to students graduating within their service territories in New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts. Only applications from students in Unitil's service territories will be considered. To learn more and to apply, please visit Unitil's Web site, <http://unitil.com/scholarship>. Applications must be received on or before March 14th, and recipients will be notified by April 30th.

Fire and Life Safety Poster Contest and Calendar

This poster contest is being organized by the Office of the NH State Fire Marshal and the New Hampshire Fire Prevention Society and is open to all **third graders**. The winning posters will be set in a calendar and the student artist along with the teachers and parents will

be invited to an awards ceremony and celebration. Once the calendars have been printed every student and teacher who participated in the contest will receive one. Their goal for fire prevention is to make fire safety a part of daily life throughout the year in the homes of all the residents of New Hampshire. For additional information on the New Hampshire Fire and Life Safety Calendar Program please go to www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/special-operations/pub_ed/Teacher_Education.html or call Mary MacCaffrie at the Office of NH State Fire Marshal at (603) 223-4289 or by e-mail at Mary.MacCaffrie@dos.nh.gov. Deadline for submissions is March 31, 2014.

2014 NH High School Short Film Festival

The New Hampshire Film & Television Office, an office within the Department of Cultural Resources, will once again present the New Hampshire High School Short Film Festival, which will take place on May 24, 2014 at Red River Theatres in Concord. Students from NH public and private high schools, as well as homeschooled students, are encouraged to submit projects no longer than 7 minutes in length, which do not have to be created as part of a class assignment. The submission period runs from February 1-March 31. More details are available at www.nhstudentfilm.com. Media arts faculty interested in receiving updates about the Festival via e-mail should contact film@nh.gov.

Awareness Through the Body

Awareness Through the Body (ATB) is a comprehensive series of exercises that aims to raise awareness and enable children and adults to become conscious of their own perceptions and abilities so that they may become self-aware, self-directed individuals. In this training, teachers, therapists and other adults will learn activities which they can then implement with their students. The following sessions are being offered at Antioch University New England, Keene, NH, all will run from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.:

- ATB 1 – Introductory workshop: July 7th & 8th
- ATB in the kindergarten: July 9th (at Orchard School) prerequisite: ATB I
- ATB 2: July 11th, 12th, 13th
- ATB 3: July 14th, 15th, 16th
- ATB 4: July 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st

Learn more at <http://awarenessthroughthebody.wordpress.com> or by contacting Laura Thomas at acsr@antioch.edu.

Mariposa Museum Professional Development Workshops

The NH Humanities Council has awarded a grant to the Mariposa Museum designed to further enrich teaching and classroom experiences linked to immigration and multiculturalism in NH. *Cross-Cultural Journeys in Literature* will take place March 25, 2014, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Mariposa Museum, 26 Main Street, Peterborough, NH. Literature offers a powerful medium for journeying into the world of cultures. Middle and high school teachers will learn dynamic, interactive strategies for opening up this rich world for students. Space in all workshops is limited, and teachers are urged to register as soon as possible. Alternative dates may also be scheduled if sufficient interest warrants. For more information go to www.mariposamuseum.org/new-for-teachers.html.

Summer Institutes: Teaching the Humanities through Art

The institutes are being held at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington DC June 23–June 27, 2014 or July 28–August 1, 2014. Be inspired this summer at the

Smithsonian American Art Museum, as you join colleagues from across the country for an exciting exploration of the connections among American art, technology, and your curricula. Core subject teachers for grades 6-12 may apply as individuals or as part of a team. Priority will be given to social studies and English/language arts teachers. Graduate credits, scholarships, and low-cost housing accommodations are available. For more information and the application please visit <http://americanart.si.edu/education/dev/institutes>. Applications are due Monday, March 31, 2014.

Childhood Cancer Lifeline

Since 2010, the Childhood Cancer Lifeline has been providing laptops to NH childhood cancer survivors upon graduation. Additionally, new in 2014, the Lifeline will be launching a scholarship program for students pursuing a program of study after high school. Students, or their parents, should contact the Childhood Cancer Lifeline at info@childhoodcancerlifeline.org or (603)645-1489.

FEMA Seeks Applicants For Youth Preparedness Council

The Youth Preparedness Council is a unique opportunity for youth leaders to serve on a highly distinguished national council and participate in the Youth Preparedness Council Summit. Additionally, the youth leaders have the opportunity to complete a self-selected youth preparedness project and to share their opinions, experiences, ideas, solutions and questions regarding youth disaster preparedness with the leadership of FEMA and national youth preparedness organizations. Once selected, members serve on the Council for one year, with the option to extend for an additional year, if formally requested by FEMA.

Council activities and projects center around five key areas of engagement: Programs, Partnerships, Events, Public Speaking/Outreach, and Publishing. Members represent the youth perspective on emergency preparedness and share information with their communities. They also meet with FEMA on a regular basis to provide ongoing input on strategies, initiatives and projects throughout the duration of their term.

Any individual between the ages of 12 and 17 who is engaged in individual and community preparedness or who has experienced a disaster that has motivated him or her to make a positive difference in his or her community, may apply to serve on the Youth Preparedness Council. Individuals who applied last year are highly encouraged to apply again. Adults working with youth and/or community preparedness are encouraged to share the application with youth who might be interested in applying. For more information about the Youth Preparedness Council and to access the application materials, please visit www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council. All applications and supporting materials must be received no later than February 24, 2014, 11:59 p.m. EST in order to be eligible.

Read Across America Day is Monday, March 3

Get ready to grab your hat and read with the Cat in the Hat on Monday, March 3, 2014 for the 17th annual Read Across America Day. The Seussical celebration will kick off a week of reading across the nation as NEA members gather students, parents, and community members together to share their love of reading. NEA's RAA will be posting tips and resources to help you make your event Seussational at www.nea.org/grants/886.htm.

Registration is Open for the Dip

While the Penguin Plunge and High School Plunge took place on February 1st and 2nd. There is still time to register for the Winni Dip, and High School Dip that will take place on

March 8th and 9th. The Plunge or the Dip are fundraising events that benefit Special Olympics New Hampshire. Participants raise funds to run into the ice-cold Atlantic Ocean at Hampton Beach or into ice-cold Lake Winnepesaukee. To register or for more information go to www.sonh.org.

Safe Kids 500

The annual Safe Kids 500 will be held at New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon on April 30th. As always, the event will be free for all participants with the only requirements being that all children be accompanied by a parent/guardian/caregiver and that everyone biking on the track wear a helmet. Responsible adults are not required to ride bikes but are certainly welcome to if they wish. Health and safety displays will be set up in the garages and will include helmet fitting and bike safety checks. This is a family friendly event. For more information, contact Safe Kids New Hampshire at (877) 783-0432 or IPC@Dartmouth.edu.

SNAP/EBT Funds Now Accepted at the Winter Farmers' Markets

The Winter Farmers' Market at Cole Gardens is making it easier for families to buy fresh and local goods in Concord. In partnership with the Merrimack County Conservation District, Cole Gardens is piloting a new program to accept SNAP funds, EBT, debit, and credit cards as a means of payment. The Winter Farmers' Market at Cole Gardens runs every Saturday through April 12th between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Other Winter Farmers' Markets also offer this same benefit for families and include the towns of Keene, Walpole, Lebanon, and Seacoast Eat Local in Exeter and Rollinsford. This program was funded in part by a grant from the NH Charitable Foundation. For more information about this program, please contact Catie Blakeman at (603) 223-6023 or localfood@merrimackccd.org.